THE LITTLE PILGRIM

"Ye will go up by the King's highway"

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A Broken Cage and a Broken Promise.

A BROKEN CAGE AND A BROKEN PROMISE.

(Picture Story.)

MAY was the best girl in the world to make promises.

"Who will dust this room for me?" asked mother sometimes when she was very busy.

"I! I!" cried May, and it was a pleasure to see her take the duster and look so ready and willing to help. But, just as likely as not, sometime in the middle of the forenoon a ring would come at the bell and a visitor come in on some morning errand and mamma would see too late with shame that you could write your name on the dusty mantel. Poor mamma! and poor May! For she meant to — really and truly!

"Now, my dear little girl! I cannot allow that!"

It was mamma speaking in her "must-be-minded voice," as May used to call it when she was little. She had taken Popple's wicker cage out of the window and set it down on the floor by the big chair to amuse her with its merry chatter. "I want you to promise me not to touch it again. I can't have my little Popple put in danger."

May said, "Yes, mamma," and she meant it. But Popple was so cunning!

"It can't do any hurt, if I put it right up again," she told her conscience; and so the pretty cage stayed where it was, and May curled down in the big chair and gave her eyes to her book and her ears to Popple.

"Ting-a-ling-ling!" went the doorbell. It was the postman, and May dearly loved letters. Maybe there was a letter from brother Ben at college. Maybe St. Nicholas had come. She ran downstairs so fast that no one else got there before her.

Upstairs Mr. Thomas Cat had some quick, bad work to do. He sprang down from the broad sunny window-ledge and tipped the cage over quick as a wink. In at the top went one long paw with claws like needles to tear poor Popple. But the cage tipped just right for the door to fly open and Popple flew out, and May and mamma came in just in time to box the ears of Mr. Thomas Cat and save the life of the dear little birdie.

"O mamma, see the broken cage!" cried May.

"I think a good deal more about the broken promise!" said mamma.

ALWAYS BE TRUE.

BE true to yourself, in the battle of life,
My lad with the laughing eye,
Look the world in the face with a fearless gaze,
Neither telling nor acting a lie!
Be ready to help a friend in distress,
As you'd have that friend help you;
Be a champion brave in a righteous cause,
But whatever you are, be true!

You will find many dangers along your way,
And snares that are hid from sight;
But remember the watchword, be true to yourself,
And do what you know to be right.
Beware of a mean, underhanded act,
Be honest the whole way through;
Be noble in actions, in thoughts, and in words,
And whatever you are, be true!

So let me advise you, my merry young lad,
To be honest in all that you do;
Be a faithful friend and a generous foe,
But whatever you are, be true!

— *Selected.*

LESSON STORY.

JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT. (Joshua 24:14-25.)

FOR a long time the children of Israel had rest and quiet in their beautiful land of Canaan. It was, as the Lord had said, a land of milk and honey, for there was honey in the rocks and hollow trees where they could find it and he had given them homes with cornfields and gardens and pasture to keep their cattle in. They ought to have been very glad and grateful, but I suppose they were a good deal like the rest of us and stopped too often with the glad part. As Joshua grew old he began to be afraid that they would forget who gave them all their good things. At last he knew that his time had almost come to die, and he called the people together and talked to them about it. He reminded them of all God's goodness ever since they had started to come out of the land of Egypt, and now he said they ought to serve him. Whatever they did, he and his family were going to serve the Lord, and he called on them to choose too and stand by it. Then they all said they were going to serve God too and let idols alone. So Joshua took a great stone and set it up under a tree for a witness to remind them of the promise they had made. Whenever they looked at that stone it would seem to say: "Are you keeping your promise?"

THE STONE SET UP.

DEEDS, NOT WORDS.

"I LOVE you, mother," said little John;
Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
And left her the water and the wood to bring.

"I love you, mother," said rosy Nell;
"I love you better than tongue can tell."
Then she teased and pouted full half the day,
Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.

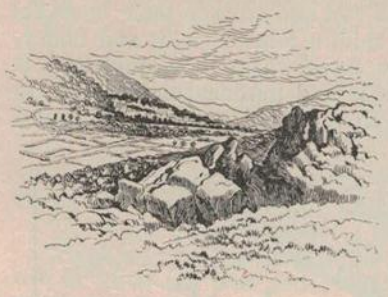
"I love you, mother," said little Fan;
"To-day I 'll help you all I can;
How glad I am school does n't keep!"
So she rocked the babe till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom,
And swept the floor and tidied the room;
Busy and happy all day was she,
Helpful and happy as child could be.

"I love you, mother," again, they said—
Three little children going to bed.
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of them really loved her best?

GOLDEN TEXT.—The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.—Joshua 24:24.

PICTURE HELPS.



SHECHEM is one of the oldest cities in Palestine. It stood between the two heights, Ebal and Gerizim, and the place itself was a reminder of all God's goodness to his people ever since the call of Abraham. In the time of Christ the name was Sychar, and so New Testament memories as well as Old now cluster around it, for Jesus passed through it in his journeys.

LESSON QUESTIONS.

1. What kind of a land was Canaan where the children of Israel were?
2. Of what was Joshua afraid?
3. What did Joshua do when he grew old?
4. What did he want the people to do if they would do it heartily and honestly?
5. What was their covenant?
6. What did Joshua say about himself?
7. Did the people agree to do as he did?
8. What was their promise to God?
9. What monument did Joshua set up, and for what purpose?
10. Of what did he warn them?

KEY to Lesson Questions. 1. A beautiful country, where there was room for flocks and pleasant homes, and peace and plenty everywhere. 2. That they might forget God, the Giver. 3. Called the people together and told them he was going to die. 4. Make a new covenant with God. 5. A promise to serve God. 6. He and his family were going to be God's people. 7. Yes. 8. "His voice will we obey." 9. A great stone for a witness. 10. That God would punish them if they broke their promise.

A PLEDGE.

THAT is the short word for a covenant. It means a promise to God and it may be made by one or many persons. You have all seen Temperance pledges. Perhaps you have signed half a dozen, like some boys and girls I know. Would you not like to sign this one? It may seem to you, at first, as if you could not promise for your "house," — that is, the people in it. But every one has a good deal to do with other people's goodness — much more than we believe sometimes. We are always helping or hindering some other Christian.

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